

Statement on Signing Legislation for Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations, 2001

November 6, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4811, the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001. As I have often said, there is a right and a wrong way to conduct budget negotiations. When we have worked together, we have unfailingly made progress. When there is a genuine spirit of cooperation and compromise, we can accomplish great things for our people. This Act, the result of just such a bipartisan effort, supports our efforts to promote peace and stability around the world, in turn helping to make our Nation more safe and secure.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation funds our landmark initiative to provide debt relief to the poorest of the world's nations. By fully funding our commitment to debt relief, the bill supports this historic effort to give these poorest countries a critical opportunity to effect reform while using funds to reduce poverty and provide basic health care and education for their people. I commend the bipartisan efforts in the Congress to fund this vital program, as well as efforts of all those across the political spectrum who joined forces to secure this critically important funding.

Likewise, I am pleased that this legislation dramatically increases funding to fight HIV/AIDS. In nations around the world, HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death and is undermining decades of effort to reduce mortality, improve health, expand educational opportunities, and lift people out of poverty. The funds provided by the bill will significantly expand our prevention and treatment efforts in Africa and other regions of the world to turn the tide against this deadly pandemic.

This legislation also helps strengthen our efforts to support democracy and stability in Southeastern Europe, the Newly Independent States, and other key regions. In particular, it includes increased funding for our continued efforts to support democracy and reform in Kosovo, and to support the new, democratically elected government in Yugoslavia. It also includes additional resources to combat terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

Certain provisions of the Act could interfere with my sole constitutional authority in the area of foreign affairs by directing or burdening my negotiations with foreign governments and international organizations. Several sections, including 514 (Surplus Commodities), 564 (Sanctuary to Indicted War Criminals), and 577 (Kyoto Protocol), purport to specifically direct the Executive on how to proceed in negotiations or discussions with international organizations and foreign governments. I will not interpret these provisions to limit my ability to negotiate and enter into agreements with foreign nations. In order to avoid intrusion into my negotiating authority and my ability to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive diplomatic negotiations, I will not interpret section 566(b) (Greenhouse Gas Emissions) to require me to disclose either the contents of diplomatic communications or specific plans for particular negotiations in the future.

The legislation provides increased funding for a number of other programs that support our global interests. It provides additional funding for our Greening the Globe Initiative, which protects biodiversity habitats around the world, and for the Global Environment Facility. It also provides increases for our Peace Corps volunteers around the world, and for the Export-Import Bank, which supports the export of American products overseas. I am also pleased that the Act provides \$135 million for emergency disaster assistance for Southern Africa, including Mozambique.

Finally, I am pleased that this legislation commits additional critical funding for international family planning organizations and lifts the restrictions hampering their work, restrictions I have strongly opposed in the past.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 6, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4811, approved November 6, was assigned Public Law No. 106-429.